

Dear SIC Members and Supporters:

This issue of *SIC Clips & Quips* (Volume 3, Issue 5) is sent to you highlight some information and certain key pieces of South Carolina legislation which may be of interest to you.

SIC “Report to the Parents” – Please remember that your annual SIC “Report to the Parents” is to be completed and distributed by **April 30th**! These Reports are issued each year in accordance with South Carolina law to share information on the school's progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC, and other accomplishments during the school year. The Reports to be issued this year should cover information from the current (2010-11) school year. If you're still finalizing your Reports, there are several useful tools provided on the SC-SIC website, www.sic.sc.gov. There you'll find some samples of excellent Reports from last year, helpful tips on compiling and publishing your Report, as well as a new Report to the Parents template which can guide you in putting your Report together. Also, SICs can now submit electronic copies of their Reports directly to the SC-SIC office via a new online upload tool on the SC-SIC Member Network. Have questions or need assistance? Just call SC-SIC at 1-800-868-2232 and we'll be glad to help!

Get Ready For Your SIC Elections – The school year will be wrapping up in just over a month, so it's a good time to be thinking about your SIC elections. Whether you hold your elections in the spring or in the fall, keep in mind that elections for SIC members are to be held each year by **October 15th**. In keeping with state statute, about half of your elected membership (parents, teachers and students for high schools) should roll off the SIC annually. Make sure to advertise nominations for your SIC and have interested persons provide a few lines of biographical information about themselves and why they'd like to serve. Include this information on the elections ballot, and make sure you circulate the ballot widely to those who will be voting (again, parents, teachers and high schools students) so that folks can make informed decisions on whom to vote for within their peer groups. More information on the SIC elections process can be found in the “School Improvement Council Handbook – The Basics,” or online at www.sic.sc.gov.

Have You Thought About SIC Training? – Even though summer is right around the corner, that doesn't mean that holding training sessions for your SIC has to take a vacation! SC-SIC staff is available throughout the summer months to provide training on SIC Basics, Leadership and Advocacy, SIC Goal Setting, and other areas of interest to local SICs. Just want to get a jump on scheduling training for the fall? Contact the SC-SIC office at 1-800-868-2232 to check for available training dates and schedule a session for your district or area.

State House Update – This week, the S.C. House is on furlough and the S.C. Senate will be in session for two days. Compiled from various sources, here's a sampling of bills related to education now before the House and Senate:

- On **Wednesday, April 20** (11:00 a.m., Gressette Building, Room 207), the full Senate Education Committee will meet to discuss **S.414** (Educational Opportunity Act), a voucher/tuition tax credit bill. On April 6, the Senate Education K-12 subcommittee, in a 5-3 vote, reported this bill out of subcommittee to the full committee without a favorable or unfavorable report. This bill would provide tuition tax credits for students attending private/independent schools; provide a tuition tax credit of up to \$1,000 for home school students; and provide tax credits for individuals/businesses for donations to a Student Scholarship Organization (SSO) offering private/independent school scholarships. While supporters of the bill state that it would save the state money by encouraging the transfer of students from public schools to private/independent schools, opponents of the bill point to a State Board of Economic Advisers (BEA) fiscal impact statement and estimate that funding to school districts could be reduced by \$360 million in the first five years of the bill's implementation and that it would negatively impact to the state's general fund by

\$100 million in the first five years. (A companion bill in the House, **H.3407**, was issued a favorable report on April 13 in a 3-0 vote by the Ways & Means General Government, Personnel and Benefits subcommittee. That bill now goes to the full Ways & Means Committee for consideration. The full text of both bills is available online at www.scstatehouse.gov, as is contact information for House and Senate members should you wish to share your comments on the bills.

- Regarding the FY2011-12 appropriations bill, the House passed its version (**H.3700**) on March 16 and sent it to the Senate, which referred it to the Senate Finance Committee. On April 14, Senate Finance adopted a \$5.3 billion appropriations bill which will go to the Senate floor for debate the week of April 25. Both the House and the Senate versions of the budget call for the continued support and funding of the SC School Improvement Council, albeit with a 15 percent reduction (-\$22,000) from FY2010-11 funding.

Remember, *SIC Clips & Quips* is sent to all SIC members and supporters who share their email addresses with us. Please feel free to print out and share this information with fellow SIC members who may not have received it. We are here to help you, so please contact us any time!

Tom